

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5466

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

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US MISSION USUN 1218

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 7320

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PFOR, UNGA

SUBJ: CHILEAN VOTE ON ZIONISM RESOLUTION

REFS: (A) SANTIAGO 7266 (B) SANTIAGO 7091

1. FON MIN CARVAJAL ANNOUNCED OCTOBER 30 THAT CHILE WILL ABSTAIN ON ZIONISM/RACISM RESOLUTION IN GA. THIS IS SAID TO BE RESULT OF "MORE PROFOUND STUDY", CONSULTATIONS WITH GOC'S UN DELEGATION, WITH AMBASSADOR TRUCCO, AND WITH "FUNCTIONARIES OF FON MINISTRY HERE IN SANTIAGO."
2. LEADERS OF JEWISH COMMUNITY CALLED ON CARVAJAL OCTOBER 30 TO EXPRESS SATISFACTION OVER VOTE CHANGE. LEADING CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER "EL MERCURIO" CARRIED LEAD EDITORIALS OCTOBER 30 AND OCTOBER 31 ON MATTER, CAREFULLY WORDED BUT CLEARLY APPROVING A GOC REVERSAL. OCTOBER 31 EDITORIAL REFLECTS RATIONALE GOC IS USING TO ATTEMPT EXPLAIN ORIGINAL VOTE. SUGGESTION IS MADE THAT INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION WAS "SURPRISE" AND THAT "TIME WAS LACKING FOR ANALYSIS AND CONSULTATION."
3. DAO HAS BEEN TOLD BY CHILEAN MILITARY SOURCE THAT NUMBER OF SENIOR AIR FORCE OFFICERS PROTESTED TO AIR FORCE CINC AND
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JUNTA MEMBER LEIGHT OVER "STUPIDITY" OF VOTE, AND THAT LEIGH

AT THEIR REQUEST CARRIED THEIR PROTEST WITH HIS OWN SIMILAR VIEW TO PRESIDENT PINOCHET. APPARENTLY THERE WAS PRESSURE FOR CHANGE ON VOTE FROM OTHER MILITARY SERVICES AS WELL. AIR FORCE OFFICERS REPORTEDLY LINKED PROTEST TO CUTOFF OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE, STATING THAT THEY HAD NOW LOST SUCH AID FOR TWO YEARS AND ACTIONS SUCH AS ZIONISM VOTE COULD FARTHER EXTEND CUTOFF. SOURCE BELIEVES THAT AIR FORCE AND OTHER SERVICE PROTESTS WERE MAIN FACTOR IN CHANGING GOC VOTE.

4. OCTOBER 31 FON MINISTRY DIRECTOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BERGUNO TOLD EMBOFF THAT OFFICIALS AT "WORKING LEVEL" OF MINISTRY HAD BEEN ASKED FOR OPTIONS PAPER ON QUESTION OF CHANGING GOC VOTE. A "MAJORITY" OF THE OFFICIALS RECOMMENDED NO CHANGE, BUT CARVAJAL TOOK SECOND OPTION AND RECOMMENDED SWITCH TO PRESIDENT PINOCHET. BERGUNO REPEATED EARLIER ASSURANCE (REFTEL B, PARA 3) THAT GOC WOULD SUPPORT IN PLENARY DESIGNATION OF RESOLUTION AS IMPORTANT QUESTION.

5. COMMENT: WHILE LOCAL MILITARY PROTEST WAS DOUBTLESS IMPORTANT FACTOR IN PRODUCING CHANGE IN GOC POSITION, WE ARE CONVINCED THAT STRONG USG REACTION WAS AT LEAST EQUALLY IMPORTANT. UNFORTUNATE NEW YORK TIMES STORY THAT CHILE HAD "SOLD" ITS VOTE TO GAIN ARAB SUPPORT MADE IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR CHILEANS TO DISAVOW THEIR COMMITTEE 3 VOTE. CLEARLY, THEY NEVERTHELESS DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE BEST FOR THEM TO CUT THEIR LOSSES QUICKLY. A COMPLETE CHANGE FROM A YES TO A NOT VOTE WOULD OF COURSE HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE FROM OUR STANDPOINT, AND ONCE CHILEANS HAD DECIDED THEY WOULD MAKE A CHANGE THEY MUST HAVE CONSIDERED THIS POSSIBILITY. WE WOULD GUESS THAT THEY CHOSE ABSTENTION BECAUSE THEY STILL HOPE TO SOLICIT ARAB AID AND SUPPORT ONCE THE DUST HAS SETTLED.
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